

Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service Policy

[Interim] **RESPONSE POLICY FOR ALS FIRST RESPONDER APPARATUS**

Issued by: Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Commission
Policy No. 21-04AM

Authority: Montgomery County Code Section 21-2.(d)(2)

Effective Date:

SUMMARY:

This [interim] policy [establishes] amends the guidelines promoting the rapid dispatch and effective use of fire and rescue apparatus furnished with complete ALS equipment inventories, and staffed by qualified EMS first responders who are capable of delivering advanced life support services.

DEADLINES: Montgomery County Fire Board Comment: February 15, 2004
Division of Fire and Rescue Services Comment: February 15, 2004
Local Fire and Rescue Departments Review: February 15, 2004

ADDRESS: Send comments pertaining to the proposed policy to Beth Feldman, Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service, 12th Floor, 101 Monroe Street, Rockville, MD 20850

STAFF: For additional information, you may contact A/C Buddy Ey, EMS Section Chief, (240) 777-2472.

BACKGROUND: This [interim] response policy is intended to expedite the provision of appropriate emergency medical care for ALS patients. Providing full ALS equipment inventories on designated primary units is an LFRD option that will facilitate the capability of qualified CRT, EMT-I, and EMT-P staffing to deliver ALS first responder care.

Only fully-equipped and appropriately staffed primary units will be

recommended, dispatched, and perform as ALS First Responders. [On adoption this interim

policy will suspend EMS Operations

Manual Appendix F, Emergency Medical Services BLS/ALS

Equipment Inventory for Fire Apparatus,

Rescue Squads, and Support Vehicles,

dated June 1998] On its adoption, this policy

supersedes Interim Response Policy for ALS First Responder Apparatus, FRC Policy No. 21-04.

Sec 1. Purpose: To [establish] amend the dispatch criteria and procedures promoting the use of appropriately equipped primary units staffed by qualified personnel [to act] acting as first responders [for the delivery of] delivering advanced life support services.

Sec. 2. Applicability: This policy applies to all fire, rescue, and emergency medical services personnel riding primary units.

Sec. 3. Definitions.

- a. **ALS.** Abbreviation for Advanced Life Support
- b. **ALS Equipment Inventory.** The minimum ALS inventory equipment required for ALS First Responder Apparatus, including these items listed in the EMS Operations Manual:
 - ALS Drug Bag for MICUs
 - ALS Airway Bag with Suction
 - Monitor/Defibrillator with pacing capability
 - Portable oxygen bag
 - Security mechanism for pharmaceuticals
- c. **ALS First Responder Apparatus (AFRA).** Fire and rescue apparatus that meet ALS staffing and complete ALS equipment inventory requirements.
- d. **AVRR.** Abbreviation for Automatic Vehicle Response Recommendation, a CAD feature indicating a unit's projected distance and time from its present location to arrival at scene.
- [d] e. **BLS.** Abbreviation for Basic Life Support.
- f. **Charlie Event.** An ALS incident designation indicating a stable Priority 2 patient.
- g. **Delta Event.** An ALS incident designation indicating a Priority1 patient.
- h. **Echo Event.** An ALS incident designation indicating an unstable Priority 1 patient.
- [e] i. **Medic.** Recommended prefix [to be] used for radio designation of an AFRA that meets the criteria for ALS response. E.g., Engine 271 would be designated "Medic Engine 271;" Rescue Squad 27 would be designated "Medic Rescue Squad 27."
- [f] j. **Medic Unit (MICU).** Abbreviation for Mobile Intensive Care Unit, apparatus equipped and staffed to provide the highest level of pre-hospital care.

[g] k. **OIC**. Abbreviation for officer-in-charge.

[h] l. **Paramedic in Charge (PMIC)**. CRT, EMT-I, or EMT-P charge medic.

m. **PSCC**. Abbreviation for Public Safety Communications Center.

Sec. 4. Procedure. As paramedic staffing and complete **ALS equipment inventory** become available, the station's **OIC** or designee will notify the [ECC] **PSCC** [of] that the apparatus [to be] is staffed as an **AFRA**.

- a. A primary unit must meet the complete minimum requirements for **ALS equipment inventory** and staffing to be designated, dispatched, and controlled as an **AFRA**.
- b. An **AFRA** will be dispatched to an **ALS** incident as the first **ALS** responder [if it is closer than the nearest available MICU] using the criteria below.
 1. Dispatch an **AFRA** and an **MICU**:
 - A. when an **AFRA** is the first responder; or
 - B. when **AFRA** and **MICU AVRR** time and distance is equal to or is greater than 3 minutes apart on a **Delta event**, or on a **Charlie event** with a patient “not alert;” or
 - C. on an **Echo event**, regardless of time difference, when **AVRR** time and distance indicates that the **AFRA** is closer.
 2. Dispatch an **MICU** only (but consider **BLS** first responder when appropriate):
 - A. when **AFRA** and **MICU AVRR** time and distance are less than 3 minutes apart; and
 - B. when the unit is dispatched to a skilled nursing facility.
 3. Dispatch a **BLS** unit only (but consider dispatching a manpower piece with an **MICU** rendezvous):
 - A. when **MICU** and **BLS AVRR** time and distance are greater than 15 minutes apart; and
 - B. consider adding an **AFRA**, if the **AFRA** and **BLS AVRR** time and distance are less than 12 minutes.

- c. The **PSCC** call taker and Dispatch Corral Supervisor may override the recommendations above if information provided dictates a more appropriate response. When **AVRR** time and distance is not available, the **PSCC** Dispatcher and Dispatch Corral Supervisor must use all available information to make the appropriate response assignment.
- [c] d. An **AFRA PMIC** is not routinely expected to become the transporting **PMIC** [of] for all **ALS** patients. The **AFRA's PMIC** may upgrade an available **BLS** transport unit to an **ALS** unit and transport the patient to the hospital, if it is medically in the patient's best interest and enhances the efficient delivery of fire and rescue services. The **AFRA PMIC** will upgrade the **BLS** transport unit and transport the patient if:
1. patient condition warrants immediate transportation; and/or
 2. the expected arrival on the scene of the dispatched **MICU** is greater than 10 minutes. [The time consideration begins after the **AFRA** arrives and the patient is ready for transport.]
- [d] e. If a unit is upgraded, the **AFRA** may follow it to the receiving hospital and return to service promptly after its paramedic transfers patient care to another qualified provider.
- [e] f. The **AFRA's** unit officer may use on-scene personnel who are not involved in the patient transport to maintain the staffing complement of the fire and rescue apparatus until the **AFRA'S PMIC** is returned to his/her **AFRA** assignment.
- [f] g. Transfer of Patient Care. After the **AFRA's PMIC** begins patient care, it may be transferred later only after a thorough verbal report is given to the receiving EMS personnel, and both providers concur on the patient's status.
1. If the transporting unit requires additional assistance, the **AFRA's** unit officer will accommodate any level of need for assistance.
 2. Both the **AFRA PMIC** who initiated patient care, and the EMS provider who later assumes patient care, must complete appropriate reports, in accordance with MCFRS incident documentation policy.
- [g] h. **ALS Equipment Storage and Security.** All **AFRAs** must comply with drug security and storage requirements established in the MCFRS *EMS Operations Manual*.

Sec. 5. Responsibilities.

- a. The **AFRA PMIC** must:

1. notify the station's **OIC** when an **AFRA** changes status;
2. complete the **ALS equipment inventory** checkout procedure, including accountable and expired pharmaceuticals;
3. make an entry in the station logbook reflecting the **AFRA's** status changes;
4. maintain control of the drug security keys and the integrity of the **AFRA's ALS equipment inventory**;
5. secure the **ALS equipment inventory** when an **AFRA** becomes uncontrolled; and
6. complete appropriate reports, in accordance with MCFRS incident documentation policy.

b. The **OIC** or designee must:

1. notify the [ECC] **PSCC** to place a unit in controlled status when it is to be staffed as an **AFRA**, providing his/her name and rank, and the apparatus identification;
2. notify [ECC] the **PSCC** to place a unit in uncontrolled status when its status is altered due to staffing or equipment changes.

Sec. 6. Enforcement. The Fire Administrator is the enforcement authority for all [provisions of this policy] policies and regulations of the Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service.

Sec. 7. Effective Date. This policy is effective on

Attest:

Gordon A. Aoyagi, Chairman
Fire and Rescue Commission

Date